

Maine Counties GIS Needs Assessment

Discussion #1

What do Maine Counties
Want for GIS (if anything)?

.... to serve internal county needs.
.... to serve the GIS needs of communities.

What do Maine Counties Want for GIS (if anything)?

- **What questions would GIS help answer?**
 - Where is growth and development happening?
 - Do we encourage it?
 - Do we discourage it?
 - How do we protect the environment/natural resources?
 - Can we improve our public safety?
 - Where are risks/threats?
 - Where are sensitive/critical facilities?
 - How do we respond to an emergency?
 - How do we integrate information from adjacent counties?

What do Maine Counties Want for GIS (if anything)?

- What do we know about a parcel of land?
 - Where is it located and what parcels are around it?
 - What do we know about the parcel and its surrounding?
- Where is our infrastructure? What's its condition?
 - Transportation
 - Utilities
- What is the most cost-effective way for towns to manage GIS data?

What do Maine Counties Want for GIS (if anything)?

- Is county-based GIS feasible in Maine?
- This study is not “selling” GIS
 - Determination of what is wanted/needed
 - Is it feasible to build/provide what is wanted/needed
- “NO” or “Nothing” is a reasonable answer
 - Useful finding from this study
- “It depends” is also a reasonable answer
 - Study should identify those dependencies
- *If answer is YES, “how to meet the needs” will be pursued in the second discussion session after lunch*

What do Maine Counties Want for GIS (if anything)?

- What do we need to answer those questions?
 - **Data**
 - Layers
 - Attributes
 - **Applications**
 - Web-based tools
 - Desktop software based tools
 - **Technology**
 - Software
 - Web access
 - Equipment
 - **People**
 - Our own staff?
 - Help from other organizations?
 - Councils of Government, Regional Planning Commissions
 - ME-GIS/GeoLibrary: “Regional Service Centers”
 - Communities within the county

Lessons from Forum #1

IDENTIFIED APPLICATIONS + ISSUES:

- Hazardous materials sites
 - Chemicals stored
 - 1-3 mile radii
- Evacuation planning
 - Where are the people, how do we get them “out of here”
 - Detouring around flooding
- Landuse code compliance
 - Are builders violating statutes?
- Dangerous intersections data layer
 - Identified as significantly available now from MeGIS
- Better real time access to land transaction costs
 - Connection between locally collected information vs. county collected info
 - Lincoln’s fully automated, deeds are imaged
 - State support of parcel automation at municipal level could provide county benefits
 - Surveys are not always recorded – there would be benefit in doing this
- Critical infrastructure is more important than parcels: police, fire, EMS (but it exists to a large extent)
 - Geocoding points is adequate
- For rural communities, could the county provide services back to the community
 - GIS personnel at county level to support towns communally
- Recording Fees not likely to be increased
 - Recording fees kept by the county
 - 10% of the transfer fees retained by County, 90% to the state

Lessons from Forum #1

IDENTIFIED APPLICATIONS + ISSUES, cont:

- Counties are caught in the middle. Contention with the state. Ultimate respect for home rule of municipalities.
- Lincoln has actively built positive relationships with the towns
- Lincoln: 19 towns, 5-6 school districts
- Carrots will work better than the sticks to encourage municipal involvement
 - A county GIS independent of involvement with cities & towns is a bad idea
- Selling back to the towns is treated with suspicion
 - Providing cooperatively is a better strategy
- Public health threats are a concern to County EMA folks
 - Location of animals; Location of agriculture
 - Part of a vulnerability analysis for hoof-and-mouth disease
 - But there is no county involvement in public health, outside of EMA concerns
- County EMAs: threat assessment, vulnerability analysis, population profiling
- Cumberland County, doing well, but on a shoe-string
 - Would like to have staff 5 days, not 1 day/week
 - Has purchased a plotter through flood hazard mitigation
 - Has received a state homeland security grant: \$13k-\$14k: bought PCs and software
 - Also has ArcGIS at Sheriff
 - EMA has 5 full time staff and 2 grant funded staff
 - Way ahead of the typical
 - Support for: missing person searches; crime scene mapping
- Oxford County
 - It all sounds good, how am I going to get there?
 - Only 2 staff
- “Flooding is the biggest hazard we have in Maine”.

Lessons from Forum #1

- Plenty of data is available; the major roadblock is staff and training
- Maine DEP is willing to open up their training room to others
- Oxford County does have access to the internet and can use state resources
 - What can I offer to Bethel's Fire Chief?
- Can the counties help institute/facilitate/promulgate standards?

? Questions & Discussion 01 ?

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Discussion #2

How can Maine Counties
Get the GIS Resources the Need?

What Organizational Models Could Work?

- **Counties fund and staff their own GIS office?**
 - Within MIS?
 - Another department?
- **Counties use third-party resources?**
 - Direct support from MeGIS?
 - Staff hand-holding?
 - Deployment of county focused web based applications?
 - COGs, RPCs
 - “Regional Service Centers” (RSCs) envisioned in the GeoLibrary Plan
- **Counties use resources provided by strong GIS programs within the county (e.g. a municipality)**
 - For example, York County supported by Town of York?

How can County GIS be Funded?

Show me the money

- **Existing county budgets?**
 - In this day and age???
- **State GeoLibrary Support?**
 - Perhaps via an RSC model?
- **Outside Grants?**
 - Especially for things like homeland security
- **Dedicated Fees?**
 - Explored as part of the GeoLibrary Plan
 - E.g. “real estate transfer fee”
 - Town of York implements fee-based funding

Lessons from Forum #1

- What more is required to support needs of the towns?
 - Who supports them? The County itself?
 - Or, the Regional Service Center?
- Is it feasible to mix county business with “supporting the towns” business?
- New state funding for an RSC is very unlikely in the current fiscal climate
- How do COGs and RPAs play into the “support” mix?
- Situation assessment:
 - There are some good “GIS haves”: Town of York, Cumberland EMA, etc.
 - There are many more have-nots, both counties and municipalities
 - Education of what is available is essential
 - Do people know what OGIS currently offers?
 - Must be greater/more active outreach to communities

? Questions & Discussion 01 ?